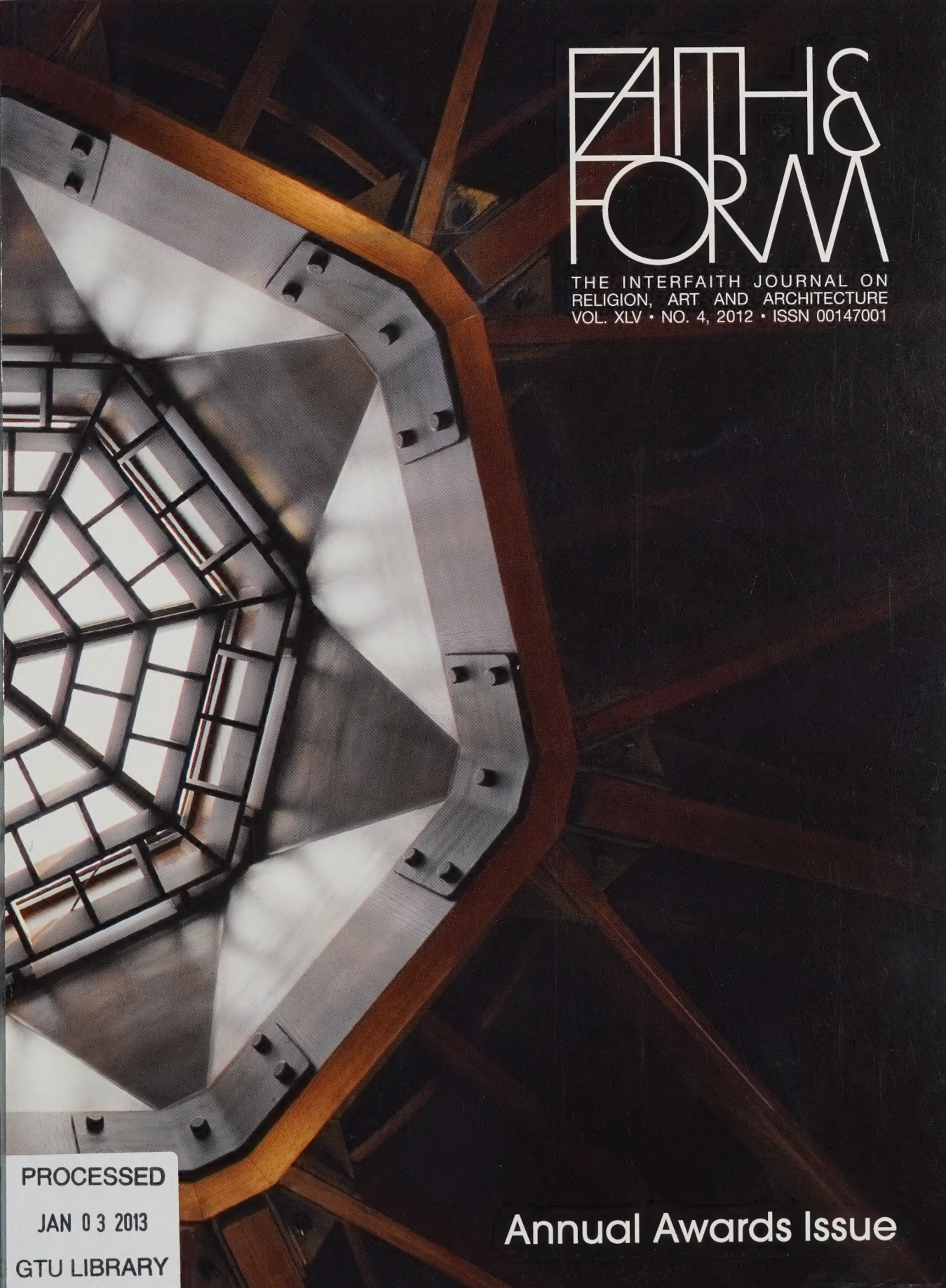

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Annual Awards Issue

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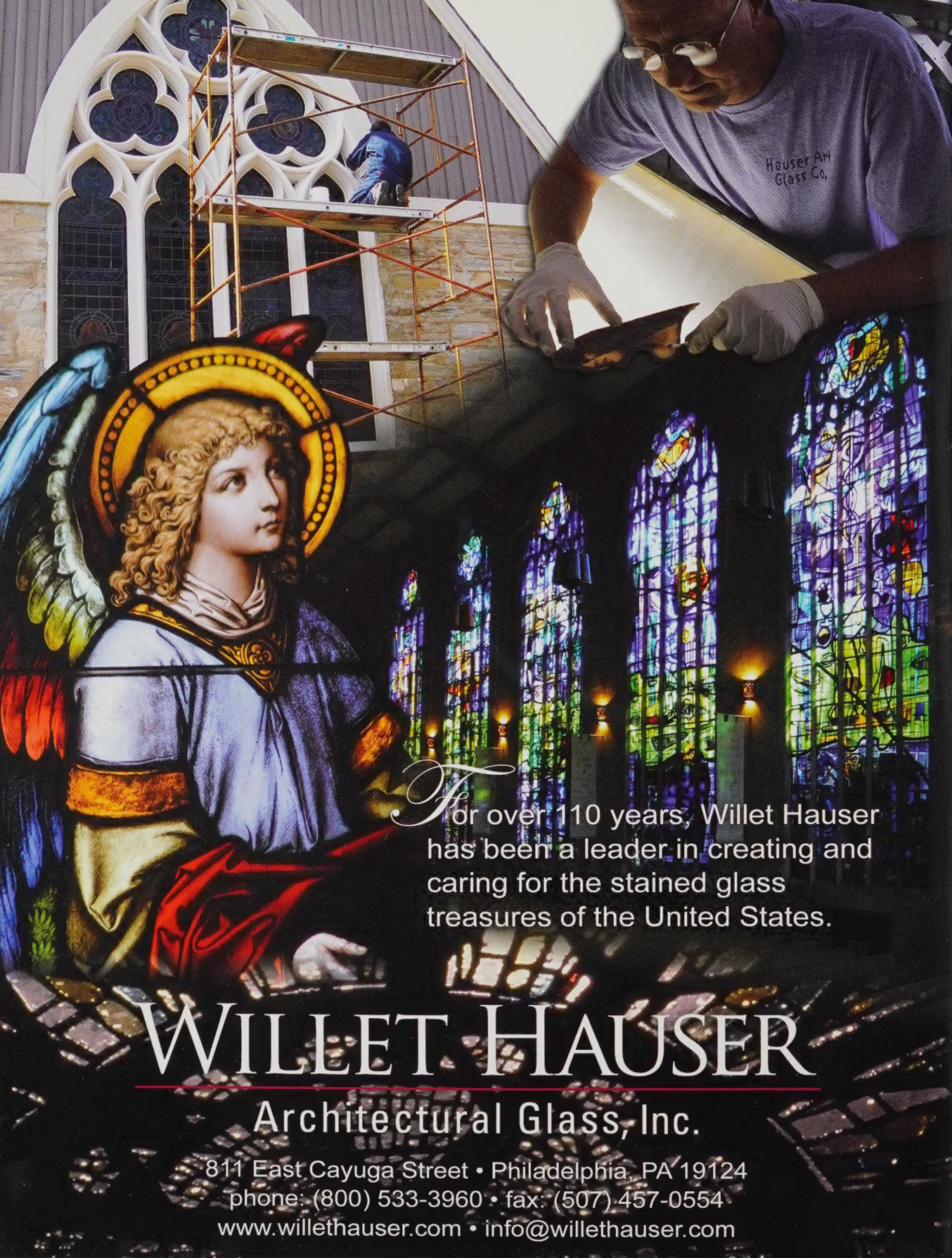

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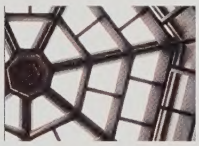

ON THE COVER:
Restored skylight of Eero Saarinen's Oreon E. Scott Memorial Chapel in Des Moines, Iowa, by substance, one of the 29 winning projects in the 2012 International Faith & Form/IFRAA Religious Art and Architecture Awards program, which starts on page 7.

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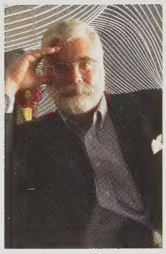


Do You 'Church'?

EDITOR'S PAGE ✶ MICHAEL J. CROSBIE

Have you noticed that the word "church" is now a verb, as well as a noun? In just the past few weeks I participated in conferences where the question of how one "churches" was central to the discussion of religious and spiritual life.

At a seminar convened at Harvard's Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study by a sociologist, an architect, and an architectural historian, a group of about a dozen of us mulled over the definitions of multifaith space and interfaith worship, and how places and experiences are shaped by demographics. Alice Friedman, an architectural historian at nearby Wellesley College, related that her students described their ideal multifaith space as a reconstruction of Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona Pavilion, where no one would be allowed to talk. Brandeis University sociologist Wendy Cadge offered that some of her students describe the perfect interfaith space as one where each person could sit at a desk sheltered from others and focus attention on a book or a digital device; they would thus be in the same space with each other, but would also be remote. These two visions of multifaith space don't place much value on corporate worship. "Doing church" is becoming less than a matter of believers gathering for a celebration of faith, and more one of a personal experience that might be shared digitally. The implications for such a multifaith space are profound, in that many different kinds of believers could use the same space simultaneously, each doing his or her own version of church without impinging on others' experience.

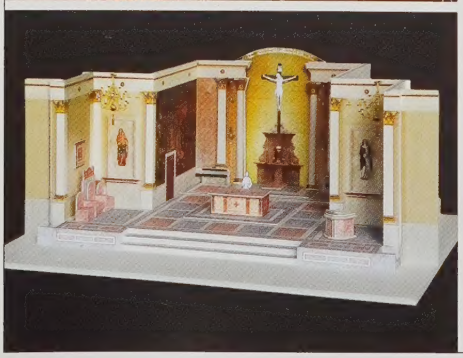
Does this sound isolating? Moving toward a "Church of One," as it has been described, changes how we think of sacred space. Without a shared idea of the sacred, how does one respond through architecture and art? One point of consensus made at the Harvard gathering was that the human need for built environments that are transcendent or ineffable will continue even if the liturgical requirements of such spaces atrophy.

At Virginia's Architecture Exchange East convention in early November, architect Michael Foster and I gave presentations on the subject of God in the city. Foster noted that the fastest growing Christian congregations rely on digital means to bring believers together. Of course, the idea of a dispersed congregation drawn together virtually is as old as radio. Are cell phones and iPads where congregants come together only in cyberspace the future of church? Does this sound like the ideal way to "church" described by Cadge's students? "Churching" digitally is not new, but you have to wonder whether a generation who prefer to interact with other humans through some digital device will spell the end of sacred space.

But, not so fast…have you heard about the revival of letter writing? In the UK and the US, some twenty-somethings have discovered the old-fashioned pleasures of writing on paper with ink pens (fountain pen sales, reportedly, have surged) and sending the missives off in envelopes through the post office! One entrepreneur has opened the "Letter Lounge," a room where people can socialize while they compose handwritten correspondence. She reports that her most dedicated customers are in their 20s.

Is this just a fad, or maybe a model for a "new" way to "church"?

Michael J. Crosbie is the Editor-in-Chief of *Faith & Form* and can be reached by email at mcrosbie@faithandform.com



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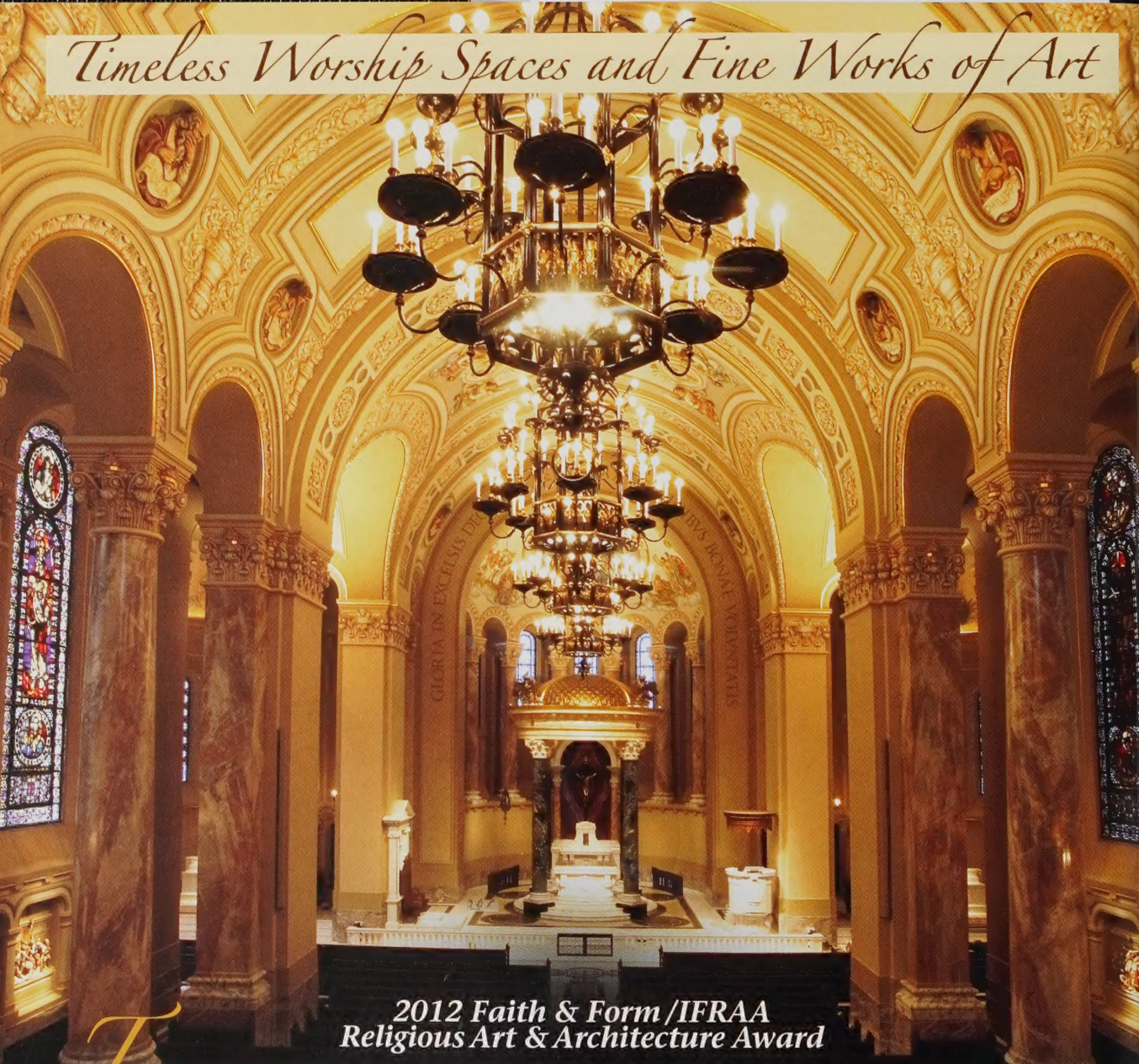

2012 Faith & Form /IFRAA Religious Art & Architecture Award

The Cathedral of St. Joseph in Sioux Falls, SD was designed in 1915, by renowned church architect, Emmanuel Masqueray. Riddled with deteriorated plaster and peeling paint, the Cathedral was in dire need of restoration. Having decorated the Cathedral in 1942, the Studio was uniquely qualified to restore the beauty of this historic landmark. The project was launched with the unveiling of a floor-to-ceiling decorative sample that illustrated the colors and techniques and helped generate the enthusiasm and funding for this monumental undertaking.

Today, the marbleized columns, glazed moldings and touches of gold leaf respect and honor Emmanuel Masqueray's original vision. The Cathedral is now a beautiful, functional and vibrant place for worship and celebration - ready to serve the community for generations to come.

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The 2012 Religious Art & Architecture Awards

By Michael J. Crosbie

Photo: Neil Redmond

The 2012 Religious Art and Architecture Awards Jury, left to right: Rolf Rohn (liturgical design consultant); Susan Jones (architect); Erling Hope (artist); Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk (architect and jury chair); W. Joseph Mann (clergy).

The first thing that stands out about this year's award winners is the number of projects cited in the categories of restoration and renovation. Typically, only a handful of such projects has been awarded. For example, between 2005 and 2011, the average number of restoration/restoration projects awarded was just shy of three. This year, out of a total of 23 projects submitted in these categories, six projects were selected, four in the category of restoration alone. While part of the increase might be attributed to the make-up of the jury, it is likely that more restoration/renovation projects have been completed during a period when new building construction (secular as well as sacred) has been depressed.

While jury members applauded the influx of restoration/renovation projects, they also felt that the documentation of these submissions fell short. Information on existing conditions (not only photos, but also drawings and other explanatory diagrams) was sometimes scant, which made it hard to determine what the project accomplished. Several projects that looked strong on the basis of the finished project did not make it into the final round because of their lack of pre-restoration/renovation documentation. The jury noted that the quality of many of the submissions in these categories was high, and that the number of projects in the 40-to-50-year age-range was both well executed and was increasing. Several jury members commented that this might also be an indication of greater awareness of and interest in sustainability, as the greenest building is one that is already built.

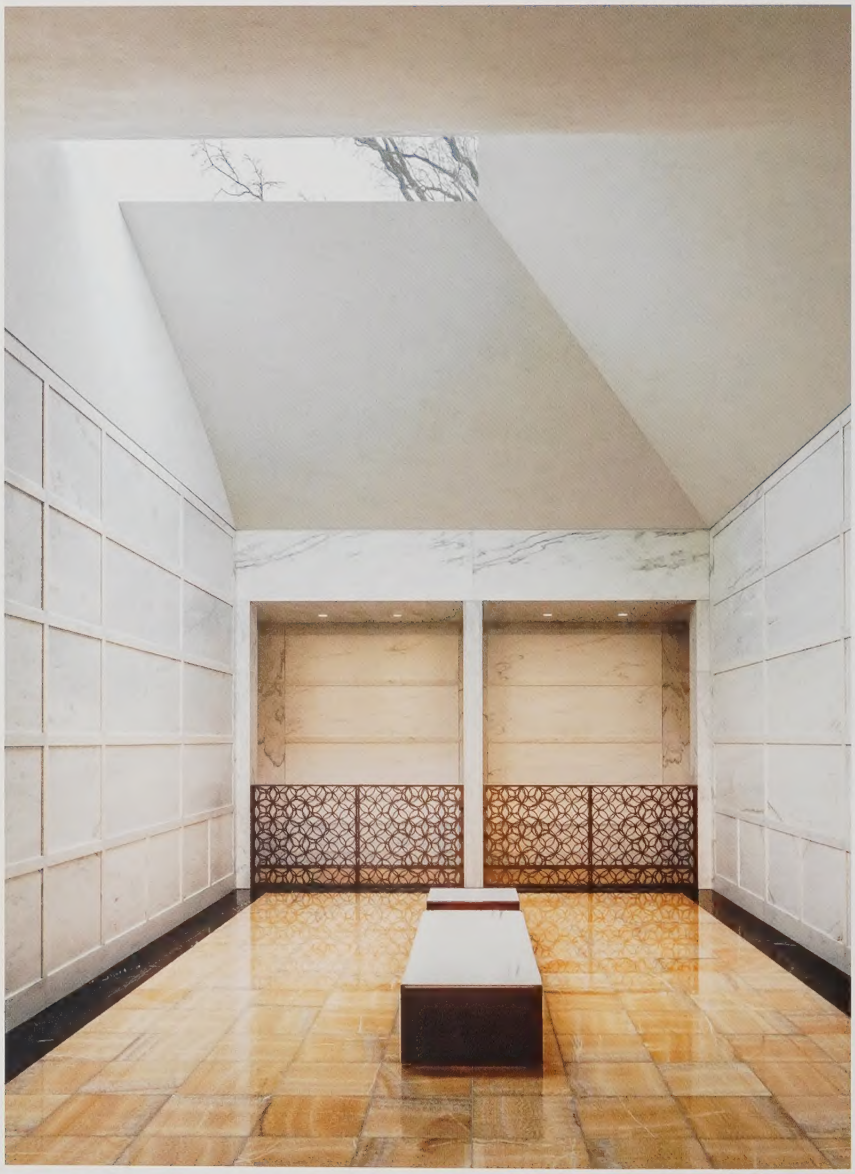
Another remarkable development this year was the wealth of submissions in the new "Student Work" category. The awards program recognizes that sacred architecture and art appear to be of growing interest in the schools, and that the next generation of architects and artists should be recognized. A new award category typically might draw only a few submissions (the total number of submissions in the "Sacred Landscape" category was 11 the first year it was introduced in 2005, and the total number of awards was one). This year, of the total of 32 student projects submitted, several characteristics were evident. First, many were built—fully 25 percent of the submissions. And of the six winning student projects, all but one were realized. The jury commented that the level of design/build effort in the student projects was "extraordinary," and that it revealed the importance of design/build in architectural education. Another distinction was the international flavor of the student submissions. Many of the winning projects were from students outside the US, or were projects constructed outside North America. The jury would welcome more submissions to the awards program from students and faculty of art and architecture.

In reviewing the submissions for "New Facilities," jury members were encouraged by the sophistication of new technology integration, particularly audio and visual, in the overall design of space. More new projects demand multiple presentation technologies as part of the service, and it appears that designers are becoming more familiar with these requirements and are melding the technology with the building to achieve a seamless worship experience. The jury expressed the hope that more "big box" churches will raise the bar on architectural and artistic quality.

The 2013 awards program opens for submissions (at faithandformawards.com) on April 1, 2013.

HGA Architects and Engineers

Lakewood Cemetery Garden Mausoleum » Minneapolis, Minnesota



Since its founding in 1871, Lakewood Cemetery has served as the foremost resting place for Minnesota's distinguished citizens. Inspired by the landscape of Pere-Lachaise Cemetery in Paris, Lakewood follows the distinctly American tradition of the "Lawn Plan" cemetery. With a 1967 mausoleum nearing capacity, Lakewood sought a 24,000-square-foot new mausoleum with burial space for more than 10,000, committal chapel, reception space for post-service gatherings, and new landscaping for the surrounding four-acre site. At the main entry intricate patterns of white mosaic tiles trace arcs and infinite loops across billowing surfaces neatly inscribed into the dark granite mass. Large bronze doors usher visitors into a serene space of folded mahogany walls, abundant prisms of daylight, and distant views across a newly landscaped lower garden. This entrance represents only a small fraction of the building's volume. Two-thirds of the building lies below, tucked into a south-facing hill and overlooking the lower garden. To the east of the entry, a green roof planted over the lower garden level seamlessly extends the cemetery's manicured lawn to a new overlook. Though essentially a flat lawn, angled grass mounds dot the new turf and contain skylights for subterranean spaces. A stair draws visitors from the entry to the lower garden level. To the west, a Venetian plaster wall directs one to a small chapel. Stretching east, a single hallway connects alternating bays of columbaria and crypt rooms. While geometrically similar, each interior chamber and projecting room is distinguished by subtle design variations that provide a distinct personality and mood.

Jury Comments

The plan expands the lawn in an extraordinarily restrained way, defining the courtyard and creating space. The result is a central place of contemplation, with light and reflections everywhere. The architectural detailing is exquisite. The complex surfaces at the entry provide a clear sense of tactility and warmth that defines the portal. In a death-denying culture, this mausoleum affirms both grief and a celebration of life.

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John G. Waite Associates, Architects PLLC

African Meeting House » Boston, Massachusets

On a narrow court on Boston's Beacon Hill is the oldest extant African American church edifice in the US. Thomas Paul (an African American preacher) and his congregation built the African Meeting House in 1806 with almost entirely black labor, and funds from both the white and black communities. The building housed the first and only school for black children in Boston in 1808. Abolitionists and activists spoke at its pulpit. The Museum of African American History acquired the building in 1972; that same year fire destroyed the roof and many historic finishes. In 1974, the refurbished African Meeting House was designated a National Historic Landmark. By 2001 the dilapidated building needed new mechanical systems and an accessible entrance. The architects prepared an updated historic structure report that recommended restoring the meeting house to its 1855 appearance.

Modern building and accessibility codes mandated fire stairs and an elevator, but the open, historic plan could not accommodate them; instead, a tower was built in the shallow rear yard, now paved in new and salvaged brick. A ramp to the new tower descends past a granite screen (masking mechanical ducts) etched with words that once rang out from the pulpit. On the ground floor 1970s finishes were removed, windows opened back up, and period-appropriate finishes installed. In the sanctuary and gallery, missing pews were reconstructed and reproduction gasoliers installed. There was no evidence for the 1855 pulpit, so a new lectern and raised platform were designed to reflect the simplicity of the space, based on comparable period churches.

Jury Comments

This elegant and careful restoration of an historic African American church that was in deep disrepair has brought it back to life. A sensitive addition modernizes access is a very restrained way, as well as commemorates the history of the place. The addition satisfies contemporary code requirements to not intrude on the historic structure. The interiors are jewel-like, exquisite. There is a delicacy of the interior, in contrast with the exterior.

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Photographer
Richard Howard Photography

Salvatore V. LaRosa

"Miriam's Cup" » The Jewish Museum of New York » New York, NY

A cup dedicated to Moses's sister is a recent addition to some seder tables. Filled with water, it symbolizes Miriam's well, a legendary source of sustenance and healing. More generally, the cup commemorates women's contributions to Judaism. Cedar of Lebanon *(Cedrus libani)*, the tree whose wood encases this Venetian glass cup, is frequently mentioned in the bible. When cut and sandblasted, the wood's surfaces revealed a three-dimensional drapery-like pattern that amplifies the feminine character of this piece, which measures 7.5 inches by 4 inches by 4.5 inches. Other materials include silver and glass.

Jury Comments

This exquisite object is tactile, delicate, and a surprising expression of materials and light. The curvaceous form and geometry are very carefully crafted. It is very sweet creation, precious and wonderful, befitting its namesake. The attention to the wood grain is exquisite.

Artist
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Sterling Silver Hinges
Jeff Kahn

Woodworker
Premium Millwork

Crystal Goblet
Nasson & Moretti

Photographer
Scott Frances

William Rawn Associates Architects, Inc.

Temple Beth Elohim » Wellesley, Massachusetts

This new temple serves a congregation that grew rapidly from 500 to over 1,000 families. The building is sited to take advantage of the surrounding wooded hillsides. As soon as one enters the front (or arrival) courtyard, one sees into the heart of the temple. The sanctuary and ark are on display. This welcoming gesture is amplified by warm materials, colors, and an infusion of daylight. The main sanctuary and adjacent courtyard aim for simplicity and authenticity. Filled with daylight, capped by a very high ceiling, and ringed by benches, the sanctuary provides a space for community, worship, and also views out to the courtyard and surrounding woodlands. The courtyard extends the sanctuary into nature while maintaining its sense of sacred intimacy. Like old Israeli synagogues, the front courtyard offers a space for gathering, contemplation, and transition to the sacred space of the sanctuary. The building face and courtyard wall are clad with Israeli Limestone. A wood and glass entry-trellis creates a pattern of sunlight and shadow along the entry wall, reminiscent of many Israeli buildings. The pea gravel courtyard speaks to the dry climate of Israel and is a counterpoint to the grove of trees and the lush forest nearby. The sanctuary's moveable seats were designed to allow multiple arrangements. By expanding into the adjacent community room 1,100 worshippers can be accommodated on the High Holy Days, and a moveable bimah ensures sight-lines equal to weekly services even with three times the attendance.

Jury Comments

This elegant synagogue compares and contrasts forms with great harmony. The building fits into the site and the surrounding landscape very comfortably, while making the front garden a welcoming but also a viewing space. The use of light with the scrim inside lends an ethereal quality. The design for expansion is well thought out and offers amazing flexibility.

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Lighting Consultant
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Structural Engineer
LeMessurier Consultants

Photographer
Bruce T. Martin Photography

Merriman Holt Architects

Crosspoint Community Church » Katy, Texas

Crosspoint has sought from its inception 14 years ago to be a "different kind of church." It is committed to the Katy community and serves it through a variety of activities, from providing sports programs to free use of facilities for community meetings. The congregation had increased to the point had outgrown its original pre-engineered building. The church needed larger worship space, a gathering area, and additional classroom space for both its weekday school and for Sunday school. The master plan calls for a future 2,500-seat sanctuary, so the new interim worship space was designed with a flat floor and doubles as a gymnasium. The building's forms and its broad glass walls are welcoming. The sanctuary windows are covered with blackout curtains during the multi-media services. At the end of the service they are opened to bring natural light into the space. Glass garage doors open the worship space into a curving glass-walled commons area. Outside, wide porches shade the sanctuary and the gathering area windows from the summer sun. Centered off the commons is a 200-seat chapel. Its glass end wall opens out to a prayer garden. Colored glass windows on each side wall lend the chapel a sense of spirituality. Folding glass walls open the chapel into the commons to create a larger space for gatherings and other activities. A combination of metal siding, metal panels, and dark gray brick create a "different kind of church" and distinguish the church from its suburban surroundings.

Jury Comments

This church represents a contemporary worship community that cares a great deal about imaging technology as part of the service. Bold use of color and natural light is a welcome feature. There is straightforward expression of the structure, which serves as a backdrop and frame for digital projection—a fantastic integration of this contemporary technology with the architecture. The jury hopes that other churches study Crosspoint and emulate it.

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BKSK Architects, LLP

St. Hilda's House Convent » New York, New York

This new Episcopal facility celebrates the inherent link between environmental consciousness and religious reverence. The vision for the building was inspired by the resident nuns' desire to connect more profoundly with the natural world and to live in an environmentally friendly manner. Spaces are designed to inspire quiet contemplation, both individually and collectively. The presence of natural light was considered an important design element in the building's worship spaces, symbolic of a divine presence. In 2007, recognizing that their existing facility had become difficult to manage and larger than needed, the Sisters approached the architect to design a new home on a vacant corner lot. The program for this new hybrid residential-institutional building called for traditional spaces to accommodate religious ritual, and spare yet comfortable living spaces for its residents, all characterized by a modern aesthetic and a strong attitude towards sustainability. The convent embraces the architectural heritage of its surroundings with a similarly composed façade–solid ground-level base with masonry upper floors punctuated by a painted metal cornice. Yet subtle variations allude to its modernity and religious purpose, such as its richly textured Spanish brick juxtaposed with gray metal windows and grilles and a prominently positioned wood tower reminiscent of a belfry. Spaces offer a modern interpretation of ecclesiastical tradition. The way visitors enter the convent is not unlike a church, proceeding from a vestibule–or narthex–into a double-height light-filled chapel. The altar wall is finished with a softly textured plaster that contrasts with the starkness of the surrounding surfaces.

Jury Comments

A simple and elegant insertion into an historic New York neighborhood, the convent adds up to more than its surroundings in the character of its architecture and interior spaces. Natural materials and light are incorporated into the daily living spaces, lending them a great deal of character and quality. The building's program is innovative, and there is great care in its environmentally responsive design.

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Laslo Bodak

Green Roof Consultant
Denis Gray Horticulture

Geotechnical Engineer
Dick Kessler

Lighting Designer
Horton Lees Brogden

Acoustic/AV/IT Consultant
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Photographers
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William Rawn Associates Architects, Inc.

Community of Jesus » Orleans, Massachusetts

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Lisa May Food Service Facility Design

Hydrological Engineer
Horsley & Witten

Bell Fabricator
Whitechapel Bell Foundry, Ltd.

Stone Consultant
Trade International

Photographer
Robert Benson Photography

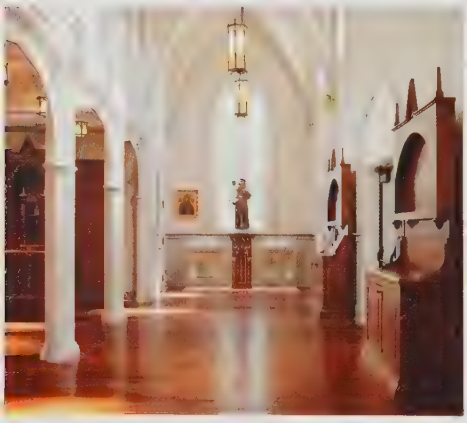
The Community of Jesus, an ecumenical monastic community in the Benedictine tradition, overlooks a harbor. Seven new buildings encircle a monastic center, while retaining an existing friary, convent, and guest house: the Church of the Transfiguration, Chapter House, Refectory, Retreat Center, Pastorium, Bethlehem Offices, and Bell Tower. A Common or green organizes gathering and movement at the heart of the Community, like a New England town common. Courts and gardens organize internal spaces between buildings. Major buildings are warm yellow limestone evoking permanence, and the complementary sands of Cape Cod. Support buildings are white New England clapboard and shingle. Of the seven new buildings, the spiritual heart of the community is the church, which begins at the edge of the Common with an outdoor atrium that focuses gathering and procession on central bronze doors, celebrating the beauty of God's creation: Adam and Eve mark the beginning of the Christian walk. Inside, visitors encounter a glass wall sculpture interpreting the event of the Transfiguration, and the font, the literal rite of entry into the faith. The iconography of the floor, walls, and apse, recounts the biblical story of salvation through hand-crafted mosaic and fresco images and stone sculpture. The strong basilica form inspired by early Christian churches reflects the community's monastic identity and ecumenical vision. Columns and arches visually "process" towards the altar in the apse to the east. The unique placement of the organ chambers in the side aisles, allows the organ to speak throughout the church.

Jury Comments

This project for a monastic community allows its members to perform their liturgy surrounded and shaped by beauty, which is reflected in the architecture and iconography. The buildings express an interesting profile above the harbor, where it can be seen as a landmark. It has a very well-thought-out plan and there is a remarkable array of artwork that supports the architecture. A remarkable expression of place.

Cockfield Jackson Architects, APAC

St. John the Baptist Catholic Church Renovations and Additions » Brusly, Louisiana



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Landscape Architect
Joseph Furr Design Studio

Stained Glass
Stephen Wilson Stained Glass

Altar Restorations and Interior Painting
Dafford and Chigoy

Photographer
Chipper Hatter Photography

The renovation of this Roman Catholic church began with a master plan, also completed by the architect, to evaluate the existing site, facilities, and program requirements for improvements. The building committee chose to expand and renovate the Gothic-styled structure built in 1907, in lieu of designing a new church. The church had undergone several renovations over the years and the committee wanted to return to the original character as much as possible. The master plan established an expanded entry, new sacristy, storage spaces, a new annex, landscaping, site improvements, and options for future transepts. Demolition included removal of asbestos roofing, lead paint, previous substandard additions, acoustical tile, mechanical and electrical systems, the existing pipe organ and sound systems. New construction includes a foyer / gathering space, quieting room, choir balcony, communion sacristy, altar storage, and complete mechanical, electrical, sound, and lighting systems. The original steeple, damaged by hurricanes in 1909 and 1934, was not rebuilt. A new steeple, designed using old photographs, now completes the original design. A new annex includes a vesting sacristy, bridal room, restrooms, and access to a covered drop-off. Site improvements include a new exterior plaza, planters, lighting, walkways, drainage, and landscaping. Existing doors, windows, pendant fixtures were relocated and / or replicated. Beaded board ceilings, wood wainscoting, and new wood flooring were installed to replicate the original design. A new baptistery was designed and built. A new reconciliation room, arched detailing, and custom millwork cabinets were designed using the motif established by the existing altars.

Jury Comments

An addition in the character of the original, and honoring the original building, gives this church new life. The architect added facilities and a new façade on the front, which is in keeping with the original architectural fabric, as the congregation requested. Instead of contrasting with the existing, the new pieces successfully extend it and fit in.

Rios Clementi Hale Studios

Temple Emanuel of Beverly Hills » Beverly Hills, California

Temple Emanuel's sanctuary building was originally designed in 1951 by Sidney Eisenshtat, and still retains virtually all of the original, site-specific artwork and representational architectural details and features. The original function, spatial uses, and spatial hierarchy of the building (along with the brick, bronze, and wood) were preserved, although the worship and social spaces were reconfigured for contemporary patterns of worship. The project included compliance with current ADA standards, abatement of asbestos and lead paint, modernization of electrical, mechanical, kitchen and AV equipment, conservation of original art works, and safety improvements to a movable wall. The clergy's primary desire was to hold services both in the round and auditorium-style as the service dictates. The raked slab floor was removed and replaced with a level floor while perimeter sections remained to serve as ramps to the bimah. The new carpet's concentric rings establish a center point while structuring circular seating. This pattern aligns to the new oculus above that allows natural light into the main hall. The unique original movable wall between the sanctuary and social hall was retrofitted. In the social hall, additions were removed to uncover original windows, built-in sconces, and ceiling coffering. The original stage proscenium had been replaced with casework that was badly deteriorated, so entirely new casework was installed. The lobby flooring was replaced with new Israeli limestone to match the limestone installed in the courtyard and a new donor signage program was designed. Work in the chapel consisted of painting, carpeting, and stone facing on the bimah to match the sanctuary.

Jury Comments

This renovation of Eisenshtat's temple works to remove later additions of the 1970s and '80s, and to restore the original architecture of the building. It is also brings it into a more contemporary spirit. The careful insertions and renovations result in a compelling large space for worship. The ark and other pieces have been lovingly restored.

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OMB Engineers

Geotechnical Engineer
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Weber Murphy Fox

Church of the Covenant » Cleveland, Ohio

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Lighting Consultant
Lewis Sternberg LC

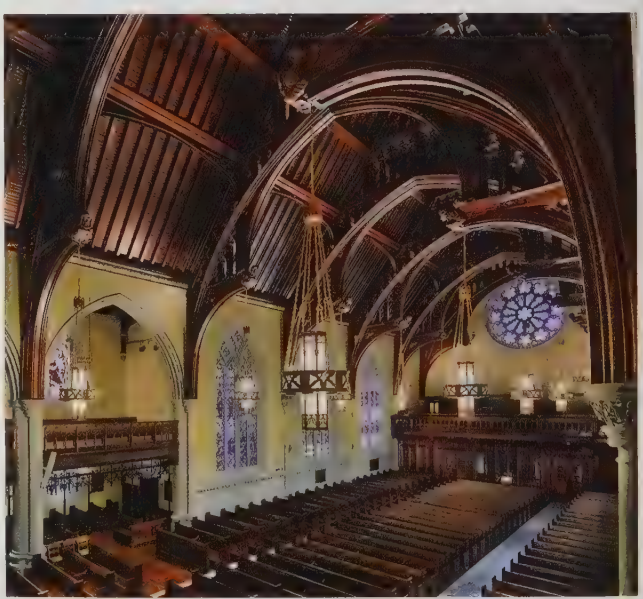
Photographer
Pease Photography

This beautiful 1911 Gothic revival structure designed by Ralph Adams Cram had undergone only one modest renovation in the 1950s and was showing its age. Portions of the plaster walls in the apse were buckling, the pews were weakening, and sections of the hardwood floor were significantly worn down. Perhaps more frustratingly, the acoustics were dismal and the lighting was insufficient. The church began the project by inviting a renowned acoustician to evaluate the sanctuary's acoustical problems. His recommendations led to a broader effort that necessitated architectural input. The restoration efforts were limited to the interior of the main worship space.

Work included new oak hardwood flooring placed over the original floors, slate tile installed in the nave aisles, crumbling walls re-plastered and painted, and a significant reconfiguration of the rear balcony to receive a new organ. Existing pews were removed, painstakingly separated into parts, structurally enhanced, rebuilt, and refinished. Hardwood salvaged from the refurbished pews was used to build the balcony choir rails, seamlessly blending the new woodwork with the historic interior. Evaluating the choice between upgrading the existing chandeliers installed in the 1950 renovation or providing new fixtures that more closely matched the original Cram design, the building committee enthusiastically embraced the new chandeliers. Using historic photographs, a lighting specialist designed new chandeliers and sconces faithful to the originals with the latest in lighting standards and energy efficiency. The new fixtures were outfitted with LED and CFL lamps to provide ample downlight and uplights to feature corbel details in the roof trusses.

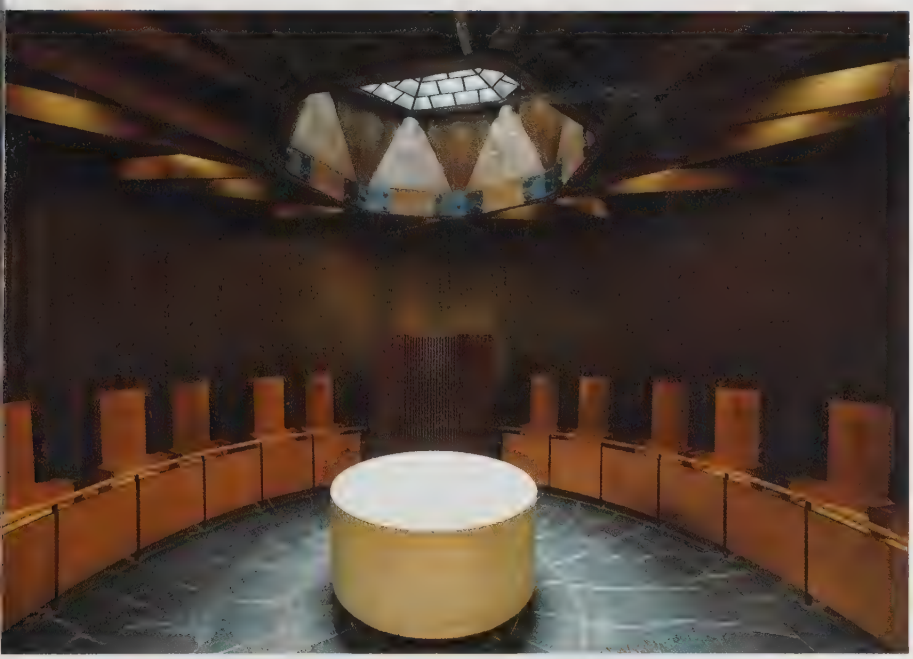
Jury Comments

This is a beautiful restoration, with a light touch. The interior has been illuminated and uplifted. Respecting the original Ralph Adams Cram design, the restoration maintains the historic integrity of the building. Lighting efficiency with new technology, while restoring the historic quality of the fixtures, is laudable. A wonderful achievement.



substance

Oreon E. Scott Memorial Chapel Restoration » Drake University » Des Moines, Iowa



One of the finest examples of Modern architecture in Iowa, the 1955 Oreon E. Scott Chapel was designed by Eero Saarinen in compliance with the Drake campus master plan developed in collaboration with his father, Elliel. In 2004, the Iowa Chapter of the American Institute of Architects honored it as one of the state's 50 significant buildings of the 20th century. To celebrate this milestone, the chapel was restored to its original crisp beauty, and pressing issues threatening the building's integrity were addressed. Working from original construction drawings, as well as conducting interviews with former faculty members and Saarinen associates involved in the project, the building's conceptual design and its construction were researched to faithfully repair the work and sensitively develop new detailing where appropriate. The masonry was tuck pointed in compliance with the original, unique tooling specification. The interior finishes were cleaned and, where necessary, replaced. New interior lighting was developed to maintain the drama of the original while integrating contemporary lighting technology. The dome skylight, which suffered from condensation and air infiltration for decades, was replaced with a seven-sided skylight tailored specifically to the building. The desire to restore, but not sterilize, this sacred building preserved the patina of 50 years, while the challenges to the building's integrity were addressed to allow for 50 more years of service. The restoration was made possible through the generosity of the Kruidenier Charitable Foundation; the architect worked pro bono.

Jury Comments

It is gratifying to see the 1955 chapel treated lovingly and carefully, with a gentle touch. Responding to the simple and elegant design, the renovation carefully adds lighting and restores it to exactly the way it was, with the insertion of a new skylight. The fact that the architect's work was pro bono is to be applauded. The architect also helped to secure funding for the project.

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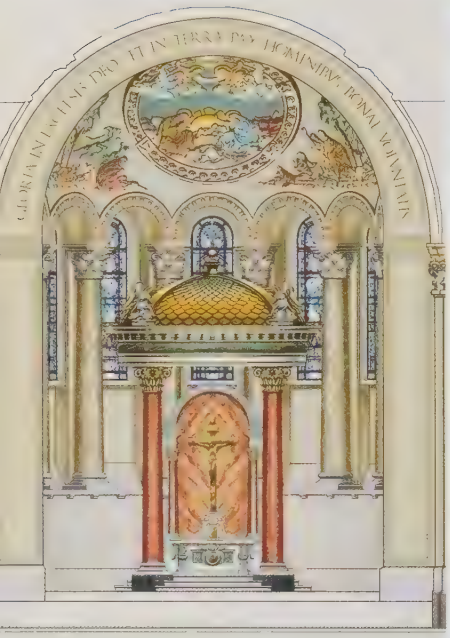
Conrad Schmitt Studios, Inc.

Cathedral of St. Joseph » Sioux Falls, South Dakota



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Photographer
Communications Office, Diocese of Sioux Falls

The 1915 Cathedral of St. Joseph was designed by renowned church architect Emmanuel Masqueray. This monumental house of worship features beautifully sculpted moldings, exquisitely detailed capitals, and elaborate bas-relief scenes. With eight layers of peeling paint and deteriorated plaster, it was apparent in 2008 that St. Joseph's was in dire need of restoration. The project was ignited with the unveiling of a floor-to-ceiling decorative sample illustrating the vision for the entire restoration. This sample depicted colors, glazes, gilding, and tromp l'oeil patterns to be used in the restoration, illustrating for the client and the congregation precisely how the polychromatic scheme would bring original decorations back to life. The sample helped generate enthusiasm and funding for this monumental undertaking. Historic photos provided guidance in designing an appropriate decorative scheme, and a detailed plan was developed for the $16.2 million effort. Walls and vaults were repaired and painted. Richly carved wood confessionals, removed in the 1970s, were reproduced and installed in the side aisles.

A new decorative marble slab floor was installed throughout the entire cathedral. Custom chandeliers were replicated from photographs of the originals. New liturgical furnishings commissioned for the sanctuary were inspired by historical drawings and other work by Masqueray. In addition to the artistic overhaul, the project also included extensive building maintenance and structural work, along with the complete replacement of the church's electrical wiring, sound system, lights, heating, and air conditioning. Work was scheduled in phases to allow continued use of the cathedral during the restoration process.

Jury Comments

This meticulous restoration brings to life this ebullient interior. Layers of failing whitewashed paint were removed and the space was revitalized with historically appropriate polychromatic detail. The elaborate interior suggests a life of the mind in Roman Catholicism, and celebrates that experience. The jury appreciates the research into historical detail and the painstaking revival of this celebratory sacred space.

Patrick Malloy

Grace Episcopal Church Liturgical Space Renovation » Allentown, Pennsylvania

Grace Episcopal Church is an urban parish in a struggling but once thriving neighborhood. The cornerstone of the Edward Tuckerman Potter building was laid in 1865. Beginning in 2001 the congregation undertook intentional liturgical renewal and by 2003 had arranged the pews antiphonally, moving the presider's chair from the sanctuary to the midst of the assembly. The congregation also began enacting the Sunday liturgy stationally: moving from the nave, where it celebrated the Liturgy of the Word, to the east end, where it encircled the altar for the Eucharist. In 2007 the parish engaged in a process to re-imagine the space. The consensus was to reorder it to express the inherent unity of liturgy, spirituality, and justice. In 2008 some funds became available. The rector, an academic liturgist whose doctoral minor is in architecture, acted as the liturgical consultant and project manager. Architect Arthur Sikula provided drawings. A friend of the parish supplied terrazzo for only the cost of labor. With money a challenge, 40 members of the parish did all the work, from removing pews, carpet, floor tile, and wainscoting to painting, laying subflooring, and doing electrical upgrades. The ornate pendant lights were dismantled and spray-painted black and track lighting was installed. Members and friends donated the chairs, ambo, and tabernacle; the font and organ case were stained to match the new furniture. The ambo, and the paschal and altar candle stands, manufactured by St. Paul Fabricating, follow the designs of Frank Kacmarcik. The project took three weeks and cost less than $100,000.

Jury Comments

This reordering of the interior and its elements reflects this community's representation of its liturgical space, allowing for movement and simplicity. It is a very flexible space, and it is the elegant renovation that still respects the elaborate historical structure, and creates a setting for community.

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The people of Grace Episcopal Church (Construction Team)

Architect
Arthur John Sikula Associates

Photographer
Grace Episcopal Church

William Rawn Associates Architects, Inc.

Church of the Transfiguration, Community of Jesus » Orleans, Massachusetts

To ensure that liturgical furnishings and art were integrated with the building, an iconographic planning group was convened even before an architect was hired. The architect and artists all agreed to collaborate, ensuring that worship would be fostered, and the gospel message proclaimed. An international team of artists worked closely with community members and the planning committee, adhering to a comprehensive master plan, and teaching members of the community in their specialized crafts. The church became a living vessel for the sacramental economy: Helen McLean from Ireland designed the mosaic apse, processional path mosaic, stained-glass oculus window, altar mensa, interior lintel and pillars of doors, corner pilaster capitals, bronze work for ambo and font. Romolo Del Deo from New York created monumental bronze doors, bronze font gates and bowls, and an ambo reading desk; Daphne du Barry, a Dutch artist, created the 14-foot bronze "Angel of the Church" atop the bell tower; Florentine artist Silvestro Pistolesi created a complete cycle of mural frescoes; a Cape Cod artist assembled the gems of Revelation 21 into a bronze processional cross; Gabriele Wilpers from Germany created the 45-foot-tall glass sculpture for the west wall; Chris Kanaga, Soren Olsen, and Susan Kanag--a team of American liturgical designers--created the altar, ambo, font, paschal candle stand, sanctuary floor design, and drawings for the stone sculpted capitals; Alessandra Caprara from Italy created 4,000 square feet of mosaic, for nave processional path and apse, painted first in full-scale images by McLean; Regis Demange from France provided stone relief sculpture for the lintels, mensa, and 58 column capitals for the church, atrium, and cloister. In integrating the arts in service to sacrament and scripture, certain foundational principles guided the decisions, such as: biblical fidelity; coherent interplay between differing art media; space and iconography build community; elements engage all present in communal, sacramental work.

Jury Comments

The arts shown in this project are in support of the liturgical action. Symbolism, art, and architectural form are blended, and there is an astonishing variety of art forms celebrating this community. From floors to frescos to furnishings to paintings to carvings to tile work--all are integrated into the structure of the building as a feast for the eyes. The artworks are beautifully executed with extremely high craft.

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Photographer

Robert Benson Photography

Salvatore V. LaRosa

"Bird Tabernacle"

The birdlike glass vessel probably comes from the ancient country of Phoenicia (now part of Lebanon and Syria), where it may have been used as an infant feeding vessel. After its "tail" was accidentally broken, the artist had a silver replacement for the missing fragment made. The nest-like wire bowl is inscribed with an excerpt from a Tibetan prayer: "Do not abandon me..." A two-tier box with doors and cutout shelves provides multiple options for the display and containment of the glass vessel and bowl. The piece measures 7.25 inches by 5.5 inches by 16.5 inches, and includes bronze-patinated brass, wenge, blown glass, silver, silver wire, and steel wire.

Jury Comments

This is a creative exploration of artistic themes that take religion and liturgy as their commentary point. The words in the basket are very intricate, and the delicacy of the bird message and the contrast of the use of elemental materials, wood, glass, and wire evocatively raise the consideration of what a tabernacle is. It interrogates the tabernacle.

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Metalwork
Wainland's
Studio dell'Arte

Woodwork
Premium Millwork

Woven Bowl
Alyssa Dee Krauss

Photographer
Scott Frances

substance

Tifereth Israel Synagogue » Des Moines, Iowa

Tifereth Israel Synagogue is a strategic adaptation and renovation of approximately 20,000 square feet of interior space, as well as exterior courtyards and site work. The site originally consisted of a traditional 1930s chapel that formed the primary public façade; a small 1950s school wing; and a 1960s connecting multi-purpose space and office area. Declining membership and looming deferred maintenance propelled the congregation to demolition and adaptive "rejuvenation" of the most recent wing.

Selective demolition, while economical, resulted in a fundamental design challenge. Demolishing the chapel removed the congregation's primary public image. A new facade would simultaneously "fill in the holes" left by the demolition, and present a new public face. A glass-panel system provides an iconographic screen for the building and creates two distinct outdoor spaces – a "private" space adjacent to the library and a "public" event space adjacent to the sanctuary. This glass screen consists of two sets of ten, 4-foot-by-10-foot sheets of glass laminated with a printed inner layer. The printed pattern is derived from historic geometric plaster patterns from the demolished chapel. The two screens are differentiated, however. The one that defines the "private" courtyard is predominately translucent, creating a space that is cloistered and inwardly focused to serve the library. One of the glass panels is printed with a prayer from Deuteronomy in both English and Hebrew. The screen that defines the "public" event space is predominantly transparent, allowing views out and into the sanctuary. One of these panels is printed with traditional Jewish phrases and words of celebration and gathering.

Jury Comments

The work is part of a larger renovation. The screens create courtyard space and play a prominent role in connecting new interior and exterior spaces. They utilize a highly sophisticated decorative motif. The reflection of the design on the pavement extends the design on the ground plane. The screens go from clear to frosted, and the project shows the range of effects that can be achieved with glass and its manipulation.

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Salvatore V. LaRosa

"Mask Tabernacle"

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Woodworking
Moss Fauset Woodworking
Thomas Hucker

Watercolor
Lauretta Vinciarelli

Photographer
Scott Frances

This piece took inspiration from the American Indian belief that the wearer of a mask takes on the spirit it represents. Cerused grain patterns in the wood on the exterior of the box suggest the lineaments of a human face (on the front) and hair (on the back). Horizontal patterns can be seen as a hairband and belt or as the lintel and threshold of a tabernacle portal. On the top, the grain of tree rings radiates from the center, symbolizing the mythic axis mundi (axis of the world), a vertical pathway connecting earth and sky. Here, the axis extends though the tabernacle. Sliding doors open to reveal a watercolor by an artist whose works often center on effects of light and water. The tabernacle measures 16 inches by 3 inches by 24 inches.

Jury Comments

The fundamental formal strengths are the simple proportions and the appearance of weights that work with the wood grain. There is a very subtle attention to details, such as the folded surface of the wood. This object may not be literally used as a tabernacle, but it encourages new ways of thinking about liturgical furnishings, raising questions about the identity of the modern tabernacle.

Robert Dolinar

Chapel of Our Lord » Ljubljana, Slovenia

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Iron Work Consultant
Jože Porenta

Stone Work Consultant
Matjaž Kunc

Photographers
Tatjana Splichal
Peter Škrlep

"When peaceful silence lay over all."
Wisdom 18:14

The Chapel of Our Lord is a part of the retreat house built in 1925 by architect Jože Plečnik. During the reconstruction of the building in 2010, the Jesuit fathers decided to convert a room into a space for meditation and prayer. The architect reflected on the qualities of silence and intertwined several years of dialogues with the commissioners and research on their way of life, along with the study of Christian tradition and Catholic iconography, symbolic, and archetypal languages, a phenomenological nature of silence. Existing walls were cut through to reveal the history of the original building, its identity, and inner character. Working in-situ the architect observed the play of light in all its intricacy upon the space's surfaces.

Materials chosen are often raw but always modest, ordinary in the life of the locals, yet rarely used for architectural design. Spruce, limestone gravel, plaster, gauze, and wheat are elements that represent the fragility of human existence and a challenge to human pride. Together with several recycled pieces, they vividly symbolize the stone that the builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone. Shaping the forms by hand allowed architecture to fuses with sculpture and vice versa. The chapel's form is a combination of three basic elements of Catholic sacred space: the Way, the Cross, and the Eucharist. Together with the baptismal font, the altar, and the ambo, they define the liturgical space, which despite its simple appearance presents a visual essay of Christian symbolism.

Jury Comments

The space presents a series of evocative, tactile experiences that are united through texture, color, material, and craft throughout this space. One uses all of one's senses and each of the materials is expressed in a very natural way, raw but refined at the same time. Timber, stone, metal – all the essential earthy elements are here, and each plays a different role. It provides a series of surprises that keep the senses engaged.

Frederic Schwartz Architects

"Empty Sky" » Liberty State Park » Jersey City, New Jersey

The New Jersey September 11th Memorial honors and remembers 749 New Jersey residents killed in the attack on the World Trade Center. The 1.6-acre site is unified as a landscape and as a destination, with its view of Lower Manhattan and the harbor. A grove of cherry trees flowers pink in the spring. A gently sloped mound is channeled by a 16-foot wide blue-stone-paved walkway directed to Ground Zero across the Hudson River, peeling back the earth to reveal a powerful perspective. Twin brushed stainless-steel walls measuring 30 feet high and 208 feet 10 inches long (the same length as a side of the World Trade Center towers' plan) flank this path. The 749 names are etched on quarter-inch-thick, marine-grade stainless steel plates. Like the World Trade Center, the stainless steel reflects the constantly changing light of day, through the seasons. Within this dramatic space visitors see their reflection, reinforcing the connection between the names and those visiting the memorial. In the morning and evening, a beautiful phenomenon occurs when sunlight enters the memorial. It reflects off the walls to create a circle of light that you can enter but not actually touch. Walking east or west, the halo moves with you. This was not designed, discussed, or anticipated; it just happens, and adds a mystical element to the memorial.

Jury Comments

This memorial projects a strong materiality, and a relationship to the sun, light, and sky. The location and orientation toward Ground Zero is very strong, creating an unexpected phenomenon that enhances the power of the memorial and creates a unique experience, following the halo. It is well integrated into a larger landscape, part of a larger park, a thoughtful site development, and connections near and far to history and time. The halo creates a place. The reference to the form of the twin towers is a simple mnemonic device, which allows the monument, through its simplicity, to be the dominant experience.

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Photographer
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Gonzalo Mardones Viviani Arquitecto

M9 / Memorial for 9 Girls » Vitacura, Santiago de Chile

On August 29, 2008, during a school trip of Chilean Catholic School children, a bus carrying 35 students crashed down a hill. Nine 14-year-old girls perished. The entire country grieved and in 2011 a memorial for the victims was completed. A hill in the background contrasts with the sky. The evocation of nature is worthy in this sacred place. The memorial is constructed from underground and opens to the sky through a concrete cone 9 feet in diameter. There are nine lanterns and nine modules. The presence of divine light makes concrete forms appear to float. The concrete ring is a gathering space that welcomes one to a place of refuge, a meeting place within the park. It is accessed by a ramp. In the geometric center is a magnolia, a tree with nine leaves on each of its flowers. The concrete incorporates titanium dioxide while the floor is of stone. A band of concrete on the paved surface creates a bench that faces the statue of the Virgin with nine welcoming candles and 27 smaller candles inserted into the concrete.

Jury Comments

The memorial draws you in because of its mystery. There is also something feminine about the way this project fits into the landscape. This is a true sacred landscape where the upper park surface is subtly penetrated with spaces beneath that create an entirely "other world" that is safe, welcoming, and spiritual. The surprising space and views created in the lower realm respond powerfully to memorialize the nine girls.

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Photographer
Nicolás Saieh

BIG–Bjarke Ingels Group

The Mosque and Museum of Religious Harmony » Tirana, Albania

Albania's capital Tirana is undergoing an urban transformation including the complete re-conceptualization of Scanderbeg Square. To revitalize this important site a new cultural complex including a mosque, an Islamic Center, and a Museum of Religious Harmony is proposed. It will not only serve the Muslim community of the city and surrounding areas; it will also educate the public about Islamic values and serve as a beacon for religious tolerance. The buildings' forms emerge from two intersecting axes and formal requirements: the city grid of Tirana, which calls for the proper framing of the square and a coherent urban identity, and orientation of the mosque's main wall towards Mecca. The design incorporates Tirana's grid by maintaining the street wall and eaves line, yet rotates the ground floor so both the mosque and the plaza face the holy city of Islam. This transformation also opens up a series of plazas—two minor ones on the sides of the mosque and a major plaza with a minaret in front—which are semi-covered and serve as an urban extension of the place of worship. The mosque can accommodate up to 1,000 for daily prayers. Through the unique layout of courtyards and public space, the mosque can also expand to accommodate larger groups of 5,000 on Fridays and up to 10,000 on special holy days.

Jury Comments

The forms of the mosque are very powerful. There is an imaginative articulation of an ancient building type, which shows the possibilities of traditional forms. The decorative surfaces refer to back to traditional screens, reinterpreting them. The jury applauds the designers' willingness to explore the elasticity of existing typologies. It introduces a dynamic set of forms, and presents the mosque as a place to explore.

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Theoklis Kanarelis Architects

Orthodox Chapel of St. Xene and the "Stranger" » Rira Vineyards, Aighialeia, Achaia, Greece

"Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain."

Psalm 126, 1

This small chapel is dedicated to St. Xene. The idea of the "Stranger" and his reception emerged in August 2009, while watching the Muslim workers in a vineyard who were praying in secret, during noon time. The place of faith is devoid of concepts and meanings of the present. The monument that accepted the Stranger and the one that has wandered like a stranger is empty; this is the only truth of the believer. The church is not exemplary, it is inserted in a parallelogram violating its geometry. In its two courts, people, shadows, holy images, water, and a large piece of sky can be found. The oblique walls restore the inner tracing in its geometric regularity. Simultaneously these walls exclude the image of the surrounding world as ephemeral and coincidental. During the day, the juxtaposition of the two geometries creates slowly changing shadows that coexist with the immobility of the architectural body of the temple.

Jury Comments

This project incorporates simple, minimalist contemporary forms, with a suggestion of a domestic scale. The jury appreciates the power of the models and the craft that they display. Everything about the design draws you to the interior. The forms move one to that destination. The inside is decorative and iconographic, while the outside is very simple and geometric. The inside and outside stand in stark contrast. The resulting design is very strong.

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Odd Fellows Cemetery and Potters Field Rehabilitation Project » Knoxville, Tennessee

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Community Organization
Knoxville ReAnimation Coalition

Landscape Architect
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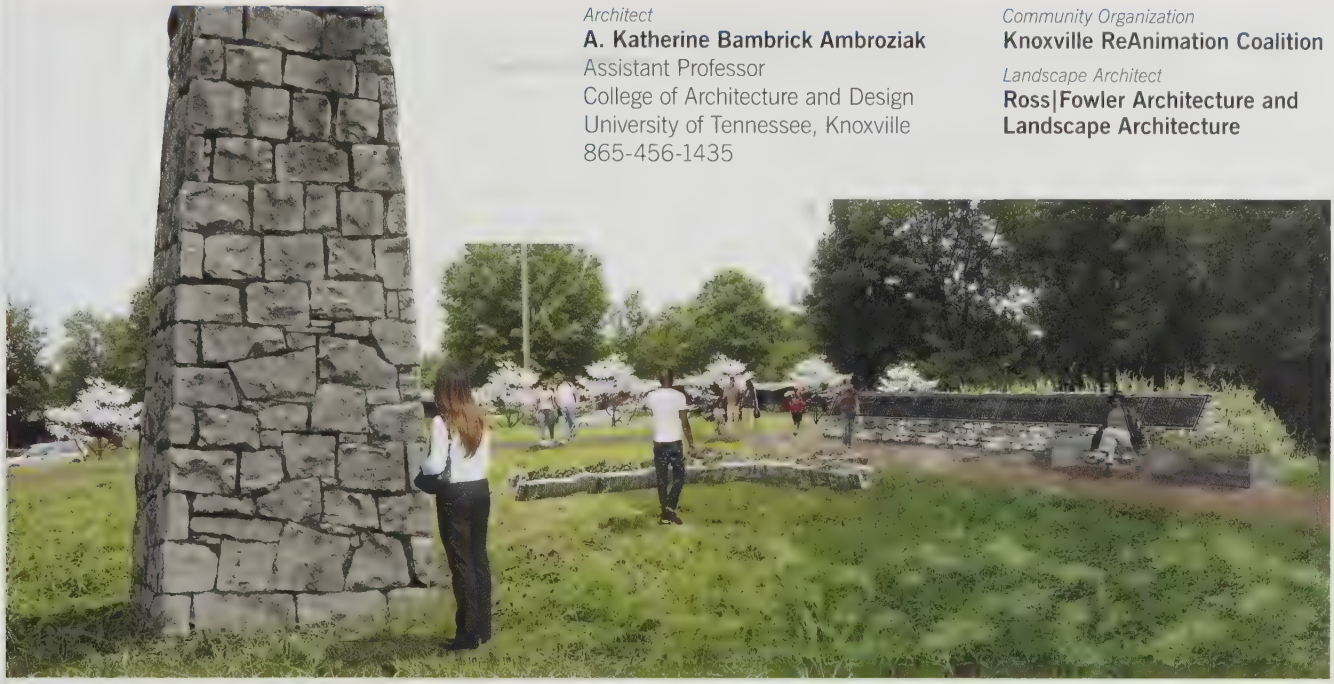


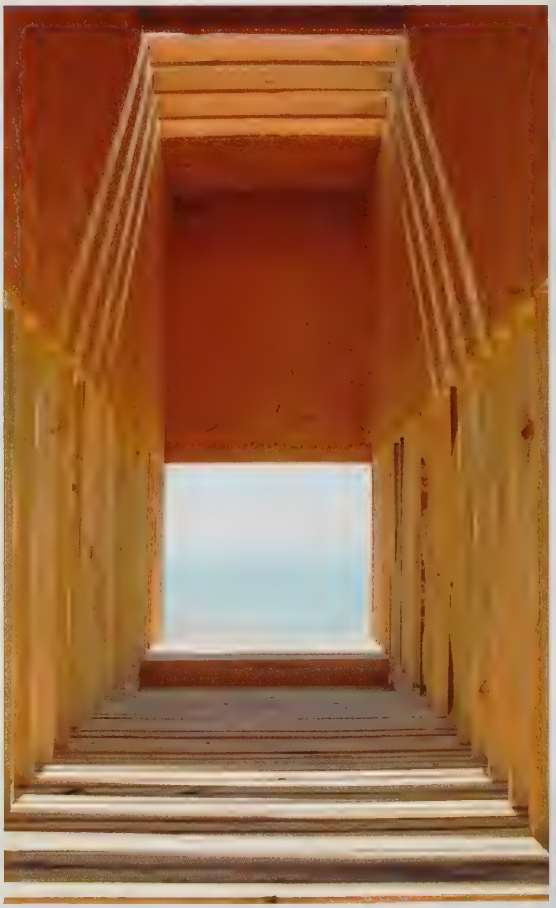
Odd Fellows Cemetery and Potters Field are two historically important and culturally relevant cemeteries in East Knoxville. The burial grounds hold over a century-and-a-half of stories by persons whose families still reside in the area, but these sacred landscapes have lost their contemporary bearing. Currently without ownership, they reflect the neglect and disenfranchisement of the community and visually reveal an absence of pride. The Odd Fellows Cemetery and Potters Field Rehabilitation Project is an evolving, long-term outreach initiative that addresses the potential for these sites to be rehabilitated and reintegrated into the social and spiritual lives of the community. The challenges are both physical and cultural. With deterioration resulting from water erosion and plant overgrowth, the grounds have limited accessibility. Persons feel excluded from visitation and lack support for way-finding. Conceptualized as an interactive memorial landscape, the project addresses these concerns with interventions intended to provide opportunities for visitor engagement. The program includes the demarcation of the sacred grounds, a sequence of public spaces for gathering and rest, accessible memorial walkways, sustainable landscapes that include rain gardens and a continuous dry creek bed, and a system for locating known burials. Featured design elements include the Obelisk Plaza, an elevated gathering area that pairs an historic monument with a memorial wall, and a grid of cairns, our Ebenezer Stones, that define the fabric of the cemeteries.

Jury Comments

This project reclaims a portion of a community's history. The story is a powerful one, and has much to offer the present-day residents. The design displays a sensitive awareness of the power that landscape can have. The restoration of cultural landscapes is important, as they are fragile and often disappear. The jury applauds the depth of analysis of existing vegetation and the physical structures. The community should be congratulated for its foresight to save an abandoned landscape, and the jury hopes the rehabilitation comes to fruition.

Breathnach Donnellan O'Brien + MEDS

Isin Chapel Student Workshop » Silivri, Istanbul, Turkey



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This pavilion was constructed as part of the student event MEDS (Meeting of European Design Students) during a two-week period in August 2011 by a team of 18 students. The pavilion explores spatial concepts relating to religious typologies from the Western and Eastern cultures that have shaped Istanbul. The project's name is inspired by its origins in religious typologies, but the intention was simply to create a space that offers the serenity of a sacred space. The pavilion is situated on a prominent rock outcrop that allows it to be seen for miles along the local shoreline. Particular natural characteristics of the site, such as small cliffs and areas of thick wild grass, are used to best advantage in leading visitors on a journey around the pavilion, before gaining access. Upon reaching the entrance, the chapel's rectangular form ceases to be the regular datum highlighting the irregularity of the surrounding landscape, and folds in upon itself to create an inviting portico. The interior leaves Greek Classicism behind in favor of the intimacy of the Turkish mosque typology. Just like the low horizontal datum, and soft ornate praying carpets of the Blue Mosque, the lower realm of the chapel invites visitors to sit and relax, rewarding them with a stunning sea-view. Beams of sunlight from a roof light bathe the visitor as he takes his seat. At this point one becomes aware of the meaning of the ring of baffles, as the slight views through them mimic that of looking through the wild grass beyond.

Jury Comments

This project is beautifully constructed, designed and executed within a short period. It stands on its site as a surprising discovery for the casual visitor. It is a thoughtful response to minimal materials and time, magical in the way the wood and the grass work together. The geometries result in a decorative play of light and shadow that enter the building and create a contemplative space.

Dimitra Theochari

Monastery of Dormition of Holy Mary » Valtessinico in Gortynia, Arcadia, Greece

How can a contemporary architect approach the notion of sacred? This question led the designer to explore and design a Monastery in Arcadia, an area rich in history and tradition, yet poor in infrastructure. This project deals with the design of a monastic compound in an existing sacred space. In Gortynia lies a network of sacred places, between secular villages and communities, which hosts a great number of Orthodox monasteries. The Monastery of the Dormition of Holy Mary, founded in 1636, was destroyed in the 19th century. It remains the heart of this monastic network and constitutes the most important social space for the people of the village of Valtessinico and the home for Father Daniel, the last monk. Studies of Byzantine tradition, building typology, traditional local building typologies, traditional local landscape infrastructure, and planting material are part of the project, as is the need to address contemporary society, Greek building technology, and the willingness of Greek monks to retain their habits; local monks were consulted throughout the design process. Spatial concepts of escalating volumes, repetition of architectural elements, and the creation of a variety of volumes that engage well-known Byzantine symbols are reflected in the design.

Jury Comments

This project uses ancient typology, that of the monastery, to establish a collection of engaging spaces, both inside and out, of different function and character. This merges the old traditions and the new architecture together. The analysis of the character and history of such traditions is exemplary, and it reflects a keen awareness of ancient Greek temple precedents. There is a complexity in the path one takes and the sequence of spaces. The result is a picturesque composition.

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Memorial to the Magar Ancestors » Namje-Thumki, Nepal

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Local Collaborators
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Photographer
Travis L. Price III, FAIA

The Memorial is located on the highest hilltop of Thumki village amid the burial grounds of hundreds of village ancestors. In traditional funeral ceremonies, mourners carry stones in a procession to the top of the hill, and place them as offerings and markers onto a stacked stone burial tomb. As the villagers have been creating new agriculture learning fields on the hilltop, some of the old graves were disturbed. Many people in the village became fearful of visiting the hilltop burial grounds, and desired a memorial that would serve as a collective place of memory for those buried there: a place where the ancestors could be remembered and honored with individual as well as communal reflection, and for the shamans of the village to conduct puja rituals and ceremonies to the ancestors. A steep path leads from the village to the hilltop burial and memorial site. As one approaches the memorial, an opening in the monumental stonewalls beckons. Views open along the linear axes of the path to the surrounding mountains, and back to the village, and to the plains below, as well as inward toward the sacred center of the memorial through narrow glimpses between the 7-foot-high stonewalls. The central place of the memorial is entered through the narrow slits between the walls, where one steps carefully onto the sharp standing stones swirling as a "sea of souls" around a metaphoric inverted tomb, a 3-foot-by-6-foot void encased with laminated glass, permitting a view into the ground and reflecting clouds above.

Jury Comments

This is a very ambitious project, which entailed the designers and the community working together to present an idea and execute it. A powerful monument fills a local need, and is indigenous within the community. It brings new life to the village, as the residents had been fearful of visiting local burial grounds. The students worked closely with the community in a positive way to make a place that can be embraced with indigenous materials. The contrast of glass and stone is amazing.

Ellen Pulner Hunt, AIA

Jacob's Mezuzah » Austin, Texas

Designer
Ellen Pulner Hunt, AIA
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"Write them upon the doorposts of thy house and upon thy gates...."

Deuteronomy 6: 4-6,9

A mezuzah is a small ceremonial container that holds a parchment on which are written verses from the Torah. This mezuzah was made for the designer's nephew, whose bar mitzvah was a joyous milestone. He has a fatal Jewish genetic disease, so the branch from the tree of life was symbolic not only for the occasion – bar mitzvah is the first time a boy (or girl) can touch the wooden Torah handles, known as the "tree of life" – but also as a nod to his personal survival. The traditional letter "shin," seen on all mezuzot, which looks like an English W or sideways number 3 is fashioned out of silver leaves. The mezuzah is made from .925 sterling sheet silver, hand forged and soldered. The mezuzah was created at Austin Community College, with James Lynn as instructor.

Jury Comments

This is a delicate, sensitive reinterpretation of an original religious object, executed with exquisite craft. It is a contemporary expression that is evocative of the old form, and shows an exploration of the tradition. The finished object displays a wonderful choice of materials, which glow with care.

Hassan Mo'alin Nur

Aabow Mo'alin Nur Mosque » Mogadishu, Somalia

On October 28, 2009 Aabow Mo'alin Nur, the respected spiritual leader of his community centered in Mogadishu, Somalia, died. His burial place was dedicated as a memorial. Amongst the challenges, the construction of the mosque had already begun without a documented design. Hassan M. Nur, his son who was an architecture student at the University of Kansas, was left with the challenge of negotiating the demands of traditional ways of decision making and building (all between the elders and builder without the benefit of professional expertise) with more modern methods. The site is in a mixed-used district with a grid layout oriented in north-south, east-west. The site would not allow the building to be oriented toward Mecca. Instead, Nur proposed that the mosque follow the existing grid and the interior prayer lines and the mihrab be turned to face the true angle of Mecca. Even though this was not practical in Somali mosque construction, it was embraced for its efficiency. The dome is transformed into a series of rotating rectangles with operable glass-fiber panels, both for pragmatic and symbolic reasons. The box angles orient toward Mecca and the interior qibla wall. The concrete boxes were easier to construct by local labor and its form is based on the Golden Mean geometric relationships, also found in the portals and vaults. Waffle-slab construction of the concrete roof was introduced as a new technique.

Jury Comments

The project history is a compelling story and the connection between the student and the wounded community in Somalia make this mosque unique. The resourcefulness of refining the geometry and making the construction more efficient and rational is worthy of emulation. The careful introduction of more contemporary forms and techniques, such as the waffle-slab structure, raises the craft of this building. The jury is astonished at the quality of the work and its realization of an architectural vision within limited means and experience. It is an urban insertion into a fabric of the town.

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Rafael Hintersteiner

Saint Francis Chapel » Arbing, Upper Austria, Austria

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Rafael Hintersteiner
Department of Architecture
University of Fine Arts
Linz, Austria

Building Consultant
Fürholzer

Photographer
Dietmar Tollerian

Saint Francis Chapel does not meet the conventional principles of the design of a chapel. It is a small cubic room inviting one to pause for a moment of remembrance. The relationship with nature associated with Saint Francis is not what the design of the chapel conveys, but rather the simplicity and openness, the reduction to elementariness, and the restraint of symbolism. A room of meditation was created: a room of possibilities that is open for everyone. It is a place of reflection, as suggests the inscription "Pax et Bonum" on the exterior wall. Looking at the chapel from the exterior, one receives the impression of a complete building. The small room of 6 square meters is surrounded by black concrete walls. The open ceiling frames the view beyond the everyday. Small candle niches link to traditional mysticism in this sparse room. At the entrance there is a small bell, offering visitors an aural opportunity of concluding their reflection.

Jury Comments

This design is an exploration of materials. The concrete surface is interesting in its reflection of the formwork, giving it a wonderful texture. The use of the niches throughout for candles creates a powerful sense of proportion, material, and light, fitting within its Austrian landscape. The chapel responds to the local context of the cemetery and creates a marker to the entry. As a student work, it is gratifying to see it constructed with a high level of care.

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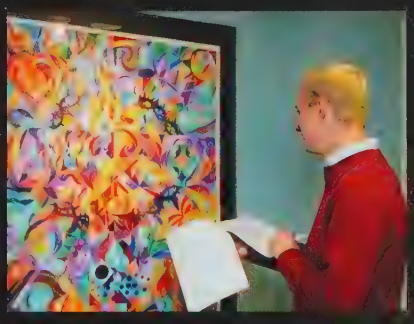

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Stern Unveils VTS Chapel Design

On a Friday afternoon in October 2010, tragedy struck the nation's largest Episcopal seminary. Immanuel Chapel, site of daily services since it was built in 1881 on the Alexandria campus of the Virginia Theological Seminary, burned to its foundation. Although the pulpit, lectern and its bible, and the baptismal font were saved, the chapel's iconic window painted with the words "Go Ye Into All The World And Preach The Gospel" was lost. "Within 40 minutes, the heart of the chapel was destroyed. It was a trauma that will stay with me," said the Very Rev. Ian S. Markham, the seminary's dean and president.

Markham was in a decidedly better frame of mind this past October as he welcomed alumni to the Kreitler Lecture featuring Robert A.M. Stern, FAIA, and landscape architect Michael Vergason as they presented the design for the new Chapel for the Ages to be built adjacent to the former chapel site. The 1881 chapel ruins are being dismantled and the building's foundation will become a memorial.

The new building, fittingly, will be visible from Seminary Road *(rendering below)*, a major Alexandria thoroughfare. The building completion target is late 2014. In addition to bringing services back on campus, the new chapel will serve as a teaching tool for seminarians. The building fund reached its goal of $13 million in donations in less than two years.

In his talk, Stern detailed the research that the design team undertook to derive the form for the new chapel. "Every Virginian knows what a Virginia building looks like," he said. So the team began by studying the original Immanuel Chapel and adjacent 1862 Gothic Aspinwall Hall, the first building on the seminary campus. They also studied Bruton Parish Church in Williamsburg and Christ Church in Alexandria and moved on to more diverse sources, Stern said.

The Pantheon dome inspired them in the way it draws in light through its oculus. And Sir John Soane's Bank of England, Richard Morris Hunt's Ochre Court in Rhode Island, and Bernard Maybeck's First Church of Christ Scientist in Berkeley provided ideas on arranging spaces in cruciform to address multiple approaches. To derive a sense of what it takes to create a campus community, the team looked to Jefferson's University of Virginia Academical Village and its Rotunda, which brought them full circle back to the Pantheon, Stern said.

The design team looked to both Latin and Greek crosses for the new chapel's plan, concluding that the Greek cross worked better internally in connecting visually to the seminary's entrance and the Grove, an oval lawn that marks the heart of the campus. "The client asked for a sketch, so I made one. Now I see them all around the campus. So I'd better deliver," Stern said in a presentation punctuated with humorous asides. To study how light works in the chapel, the firm has been building large-scale models. "I'm not much of a computer guy. I'll stick my head into these models and look around," said Stern.

The architect put the building and its importance in context: "The new building will be a celebration of continuity and of divine presence. It will help us live with the new century without being its servant. My job is to keep the story going for the present and for the future. To design a sacred space is a wonderful, rewarding challenge for an architect. Throughout the history of architecture the design of sacred spaces has been perhaps the highest obligation of architecture."

--Douglas Gordon, Hon. AIA

The author is editor of InForm, *the magazine of the Virginia Society of the American Institute of Architects*

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Avenues to the Holy

The Last Word * Richard S. Vosko, Ph.D., Hon. AIA

As I browse this year's winners of the Faith & Form / IFRAA international awards program I recall the words of the German expressionist architect, Erich Mendelsohn. Writing in *Commentary* in 1947, Mendelsohn observed, "It has been said that religious structures must be 'traditional' in order to impart a sense of the sacred, that the dignity and emotional significance of such buildings can only be expressed through historical associations. To admit this is to deny that religion is an important part of our contemporary society." Mendelsohn's work underscored this claim: he and other post-World War II architects designed modern places of worship sensitive to emerging liturgical practices.

The Faith & Form / IFRAA awards program is a helpful instrument in gauging trends in the world of religious art and architecture. Among this year's winners there is a wide range of beauty, color, airiness, illumination, verticality, simplicity, ornateness, and functionality. Each one has been judged to be a worthy place or artifact whose end purpose is to serve some religious purpose. Whether for public worship, personal devotion, or the burial of loved ones, the examples depicted in this issue tell us that creativity and imagination are still the tools of good designers.

Architects, religious leaders, and congregants today do not agree on what architectural or artistic design is appropriate for the worship of God. The discourse is shaped by scrutiny: how well do architecture and the arts energize a connection with the holy other? Looking at these awards it would be futile to make an evaluation. One specific conundrum for designers has to do with learning which techniques and methods are best for creating a sacred space. Innumerable publications and conferences continue to address this topic. Religious camps armed with words like "immanence" and "transcendence" continue to debate which style is more appropriate for engaging with an ineffable supreme being.

I believe it almost impossible for anyone to design a place that is automatically, by virtue of the design process, a sacred space. Instead, it makes sense to me to say that places become sacred over time because of the events that occur there, because of relationships created there, because of the stories and memories that take root there. The ritual activities of the users (who act alone or collectively) give acute meaning to an ordinary place designed to allow for the possibility of a sacred encounter. The ability to discover something or someone extraordinary in a built environment suggests that the building needs to be a timeless tabula rasa allowing each generation to inscribe its own narrative.

This is why the award winners shown in this journal represent such a diverse palette of religious art and architecture. There are simply too many avenues that can lead to the discovery of the holy that it cannot, by virtue of its own definition, be circumscribed.

And then there is what could be the "last word." Recent studies tell us that 34 percent of the US population of persons under the age of 30 are not affiliated with any religion. These "nones" are spiritual; they pray, they believe in God, and they are not looking to join a religion. I wonder what they might think of these award winners.

The writer is a liturgical designer and also a member of the *Faith & Form* Board of Advisors

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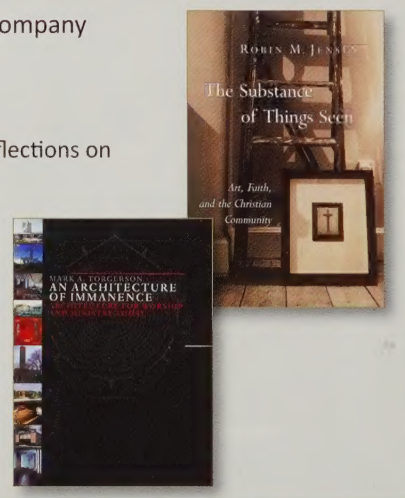
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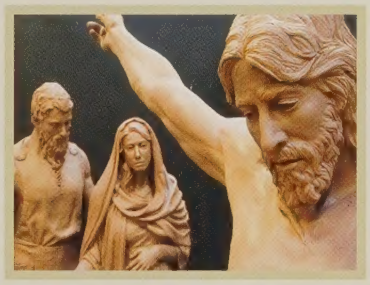

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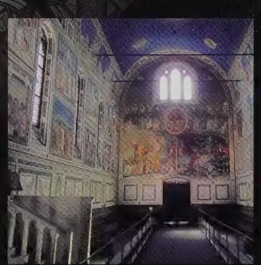

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